



The Conservation Strip

CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCES FOR A BETTER ENVIRONMENT

98 ALEXANDRIA PIKE, SUITE 31 ► WARRENTON, VA 20186

EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL CONSERVATION DINNER

The John Marshall Soil and Water Conservation District (JMSWCD) hosted the Eighteenth Annual Conservation Dinner Meeting on November 13, 2002, at Fauquier High School. The JMSWCD staff highlighted educational programs, the Virginia Agricultural Best Management Practices Cost-share Program, and the Fauquier County Erosion & Sediment Control Program. Each year, the JMSWCD recognizes individuals for outstanding conservation accomplishments at the dinner meeting and informs the citizens of Fauquier County about District programs. Award recipients for 2002 included:

- Each year, the JMSWCD sponsors students in grades 9-12 from Fauquier County to attend Youth Conservation Camp at Virginia Tech. Youth Conservation Camp gives students an opportunity to stay on a college campus while learning more about aquatics, soils, forestry, wildlife, environmental issues, watersheds

and water quality. This past July, **John Wargo** attended the camp on behalf of the JMSWCD.

- The National Association of Conservation District's (NACD) Conservation Poster Contest Award was presented to **Caitlin Bryan**. Every year, the JMSWCD sponsors a fourth grade poster contest in conjunction with National Soil and Water Stewardship Week in late April. Caitlin, a student at Fresta Valley Christian School, won first place in the District contest. Her poster was eligible for entry in the State contest, where Caitlin again won first place. Now, her poster is entered in the NACD's National poster contest. The District congratulates Caitlin on her hard work in designing a winning poster and wishes her good luck in the National contest.
- The JMSWCD recognizes **citizen volunteers** each year. **John Schied** has been a volunteer with the JMSWCD since 1994, assisting with the Erosion & Sediment Control Program. He provides assistance at least one day a week to conduct erosion and sediment control inspections. For the past two years, the JMSWCD has partnered with the Culpeper SWCD to coordinate the Upper Rappahannock Watershed Stream Monitoring Program. Teams of citizen volunteers monitor eleven sites in Fauquier County (and sites in other counties), covering the entire upper Rappahannock watershed. On a quarterly basis, the volunteers, most of which are certified Save Our Streams macroinvertebrate monitors, conduct biological and chemical monitoring on selected sites. **John Bauer, Caryl Buck, Tom Harris, and Carey Whitehead** provide assistance for this program. All volunteers were recognized and received a framed "Volunteer Appreciation" print.

- The 2002 Forestry Award was presented to **St. Leonards Farm**, owned by **David Van Roijen**. Mr. Van

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12th Annual Tree Seedling Sale

The JMSWCD will be taking tree seedling orders through **February 21, 2003**. This year, several native trees and shrubs are being offered. Trees include:

Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)
Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*)
Graystem Dogwood (*Cornus racemosa*)
Flowering Dogwood (*Cornus florida*)
Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
Carolina Silverbell (*Halesia carolina*)
Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*)
Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)
American Cranberry Bush (*Viburnum trilobum*)
Buttonbush (*Cephalanthus occidentalis*)

Trees must be picked up at the Department of Forestry **only** on **March 15, 2003**. For more information, or to request an order form, please call (540) 347-3120, ext. 3.

Meet JMSWCD Employee **Sarah Kleckner**

Sarah Kleckner is the most recent addition to the JMSWCD staff. Hired as an Erosion and Sediment Control Specialist, Sarah administers the Fauquier County Single Family Home Erosion and Sediment Control Inspection Program.

Sarah graduated from West Virginia University with a B.S in Environmental Protection, with a major emphasis on Soil Science. Following graduation, she remained at WVU to conduct research on soil properties.

Two years ago, Sarah moved to Virginia and interned at the U.S. Geological Survey. While there, she worked on a project to examine the geochemistry of the Florida Everglades.

Sarah currently resides in Leesburg. She enjoys hiking and sightseeing.



Sarah Kleckner
E & S Specialist

Teacher's Corner

- Application forms are available for the **Virginia SWCD Education Foundation Scholarships**. High school seniors who plan to study conservation or other environmental fields are eligible. Applications are due by March 14, 2003. Call 347-3120, ext. 3, for more details.
- In conjunction with "**Soil and Water Stewardship Week**", April 27-May 4, 2003, the JMSWCD is sponsoring a **poster contest** for **fourth grade students**. The theme for Stewardship Week and for the poster contest is "**Food for the Future**". For more information, posters and other materials, call Catherine at 347-3120, ext. 3.
- Will your class study **soils, watersheds, water pollution** or similar topics sometime during the school year? The JMSWCD has a variety of **classroom programs and activities** to supplement your conservation education curriculum, including an EnviroScape model, to help meet appropriate SOLs. To find out more, call 347-3120, ext. 3, and ask for Catherine.
- The JMSWCD is seeking teachers and students from all high schools in Fauquier County who wish to participate in this year's **Envirothon** competition. Envirothon teams study natural resource topics and then test their knowledge against other teams at regional and state levels. The program is built on an "in field" style of learning, and is in-

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EVENT CALENDAR

January 18	Landowner Woods and Wildlife Conference , George Mason University, Prince William Campus, Manassas. Topics related to wildlife, forest products, soils, financial assistance, management strategies, etc. will be presented. Contact Becky Elia, District Events Coordinator, at (540) 341-7961 (or belia@vt.edu) for more information.
January 23	Area Forage Conference , Marshall Ruritan Building, Marshall. Topics to be discussed include reseeding and managing pastures after a drought, tall fescue: managing problems, new options for weed control in forages, and others. Two other conferences will be held: Madison County, January 24, and Charlottesville, January 27th. For more information, please call Keith Dickinson at (540) 341-7950, ext. 12.
January 31	Vegetables and Small Fruit Meeting , Warrenton. Call Keith Dickinson at (540) 341-7950, ext. 12, for more details.
February 13	Commercial Ornamental Crop Meeting , Warrenton. For more Information, call Keith Dickinson at (540) 341-7950, ext. 12.
March 15	Tree Seedling Pickup , Department of Forestry. 9:00 a.m.-1:00p.m. This will be the only pickup date. Call the JMSWCD for more information at (540) 347-3120, ext. 3.

Roijen follows a written Forest Management Plan. He implemented recommendations made by the local forester in regards to timber harvesting and reforestation. This past year, Mr. Van Roijen planted 182 acres of loblolly tree seedlings on erodible cropland and pastureland and has maintained a mandatory 50 foot buffer zone along streams. In addition, 800 acres of St. Leonard's Farm is being considered for a conservation easement.

- The 2002 Urban Forester of the Year award was presented to the **Town of Warrenton**, in recognition of tree planting and the protection of ten locations along right-of-ways and Town property. The Town of Warrenton is taking a proactive conservation approach to protecting the Town with a more natural environment. **Mr. Robert Rice** accepted the award on behalf of the Town and thanked the Tree Board for their input on the best selection of species for each location.
- The 2001-2002 Edwin F. Gulick Conservation Educator Award was presented to **Pam Graves** and **Janie Mosby**, teachers at Brumfield Elementary School. Mary Lou Trimble, JMSWCD Director and former teacher, commended Pam and Janie for their conservation education accomplishments. Ms. Graves and Ms. Mosby were recognized for their dedication and professionalism in leading the Brumfield Ecology Club in maintaining a habitat garden and bluebird trail. In addition, Pam and Janie provide hands-on opportunities for the students to learn about different native species and the importance of protecting natural resources.
- The 2002 Virginia Syngenta Conservation Education Secondary Teacher of the Year was presented to **Helen Lathrop**, biology teacher at Fauquier High School. Ms. Lathrop was the District's Edwin Gulick Conservation Educator award recipient last year. **Stephanie Martin**, Executive Director of the Virginia Association of Soil & Water Conservation Districts, presented the award. She highlighted Ms. Lathrop's conservation accomplishments in educating youth about protecting our natural resources, especially through water quality monitoring programs.
- The 2002 Harry Jones Conservation Farmer Award for the **Potomac watershed** was awarded to **Hill Crest Farm**, located in northern Fauquier County about a mile north of Delaplane. One of

the oldest black angus cattle farms in the nation, the **John Rucker** family began raising and selling black angus for breeding stock in 1924. Over the past several years, they have worked with the JMSWCD implementing conservation practices on Hill Crest Farm. Approximately 10,800 feet of stream protection fencing, a well and two pressure troughs, two gravity fed troughs and three hardened stream crossings have been established as part of their continuing soil and water conservation practices.

- The 2002 Harry Jones Conservation Farmer Award for the **Rappahannock watershed** was presented to **Rosedale Farm**, owned and operated by the **Howard Grove** family. This 280 acre farm near Morrisville produces 150 angus, angus cross cattle on fescue pasture; orchardgrass, alfalfa and timothy hay, and soybeans and barley in rotation. In 2002 the Grove's installed a grazing land protection best management practice on Rosedale Farm, consisting of 9,728 feet of pond and stream protection fencing, two hardened pond access ramps, a hardened stream access, and a hardened travelway.
- The 2002 Clean Water/Bay Friendly Farm Award was presented by John Chambers and Jack Frye, Director of the Department of Conservation and Recreation - Division of Soil & Water Conservation, to **Al-Mara Farm, Inc.**, owned and operated by the **Leonard** family. Mr. Frye pointed out that Al-Mara Farm is one of the most progressive and innovative dairy farms in Virginia. In 1997, in cooperation with the JMSWCD, the Leonard family recommitted themselves to the dairy industry and to farming by updating their animal waste management system. A concrete animal waste storage facility replaced the 1970's earthen pit, increasing the storage capacity to 1.7 million gallons. In 2002, a contaminated surface water collection and pumping system was installed, resulting in 100 percent containment of manure. In addition, the Leonards conduct soil testing, manure testing, crop rotations and soil conservation tillage, as well as following a nutrient management plan. They were one of the first farms to begin using newspaper for animal bedding. A new state of the art milking parlor and a milk monitoring computer system was also installed for their 325 cow dairy. Always looking for a new challenge, the Leonards branched out into the Agri-tainment industry in 2001 by opening Al-Mara Farm to school children and the public for educational tours and corn maze adventures.





Chuck Hoysa and Jim Scibek explain the importance of insects to students from Cedar Lee Middle School.

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tended to be fun as well as educational. Call (540) 347-3120, ext. 3 for more details.

• **Interesting Websites for Teachers:**

<http://opposite.stsci.edu/pubinfo/pictures.html>.

Space Telescope Science Institute. If your class is studying about space, this Hubble Space Telescope Public Pictures site is awe-inspiring. Photos from 1994-2002 can be printed. Links to NASA and other sites are included.

www.theteachersguide.com/plantsflowers.htm. **The Teacher's Guide.** For teaching elementary botany, this site can't be beat. Lessons plans, such as "Pollination Parties," and "Plants and Oxygen: Breathing Easy," and other activities, such "Wildflower Coloring Books," "Flower Clip Art" and "Plant Crafts" abound.

WILDLIFE SEED MIX AVAILABLE

If establishing a food patch for wildlife on your property is important, reserve a **free** bag of wildlife seed mix from the JMSWCD. As part of its continuing effort to promote wildlife conservation, the JMSWCD is offering a perennial seed mix (20% red clover, 20% orchardgrass, 30% Korean lespedeza and 30% browntop millet) on a first-come, first-served basis to Fauquier landowners, clubs and organizations while supplies last. The limit is five pounds per family or organization. Ideal for attracting birds and small mammals, the mixture is appropriate in small patches or strips along fence rows, around ponds or along tree lines. The mix will not be available until the middle of March, but call the JMSWCD at 347-3120, ext. 3, to reserve your free perennial seed mix as soon as possible.

Conservation Field Day Held at Elk Mount Farm

Thanks to the **Woodrow Patton family**, seventh grade students from **Cedar Lee Middle School** now have a clearer understanding and a greater appreciation for agriculture and conservation in a farm environment. On October 3, 2002, approximately 200 students from Cedar Lee Middle School attended a **Conservation Field Day**, sponsored by the JMSWCD, at Elk Mount Farm. Students rotated through various stations that demonstrated farm and conservation-related topics. The topics included: newspaper for animal bedding, farm management (calf petting required!), nutrient management, dairy management, water quality, soils, forestry and insects.

The Patton family is to be commended for allowing their farm to be used once again for this important educational opportunity. The JMSWCD also thanks the guest speakers for ensuring the success of this valuable learning experience: **Billy Patton**; **Laura Whitmer**; **Robert Shoemaker**, Department of Conservation and Recreation; **Robyn Joiner**, Joiner Micro Labs; **Chuck Kuhler**, VA Department of Forestry; **Chuck Hoysa**, retired Fauquier County Extension Agent; **Jim Scibek**, Fauquier County Master Gardeners; **John Chambers**, JMSWCD; **Tom Turner**, JMSWCD; **Christine Miller**, JMSWCD; **Mike Blake**, JMSWCD; and **Sarah Kleckner**, JMSWCD.



A SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS AT THE ANNUAL CONSERVATION DINNER MEETING:

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Smith and Sons Equipment Corporation
Rankin's Furniture, Hardware and Sports
Warrenton-Remington-Marshall Farmers Co-op

Landowner Woods and Wildlife Conference

A **Woods and Wildlife Conference** is slated for Saturday, January 18th at George Mason University, Prince William Campus, near Manassas. The goal of the conference is to help landowners make “best decisions” for themselves, their land and society as a whole through better stewardship. The conference is a virtual “one stop/first stop” shop for individuals, families, managers, and other interested people for educational information about how to sustainably manage their woodlands and/or openlands. Participants will be provided with multiple links to information, possible sources of financial assistance and a better understanding of natural resources.

Topics include: Wildlife Habitat Management, Financial Assistance, Wildlife Damage, Growing Good Timber, Land Conservation, Soils and Productivity, Ecosystems and Private Land, Landowner Goals and Objectives, Alternative Forest Products, Pond Management and Invasive Plants. These will be offered as a mixture of general and concurrent sessions.

The cost of the conference is \$25.00/person, \$40.00/couple. The fee includes refreshment for the morning and afternoon breaks, lunch and a conference packet. Pre-registration is due January 10. For more information about this conference, please contact Becky Elia, District Events Coordinator, at (540) 341-7961 or belia@vt.edu

Holiday Lake Forestry Camp

For over 50 years, **Holiday Lake Forestry Camp** has introduced young Virginians to the challenges, special skills and knowledge needed for managing forest resources which are used and enjoyed every day. The camp is designed for students who want to: explore and experience activities in forestry and wildlife related careers; participate in forestry and wildlife judging teams, Envirothon competitions or ecology clubs; and, have a special interest in *hands on* learning about natural resources. Classes are taught by professional foresters, wildlife biologists and conservation resource specialists. Located within the 20,000 acre Appomattox-Buckingham State Forest, the Camp is held at the Holiday Lake 4-H Education Center from June 19-24. The John Marshall SWCD sponsors **two** students to attend this camp each year. The registration deadline is April 19. Call the JMSWCD office at 347-3120, ext. 3, for more details.

Youth Conservation Camp

Each year the JMSWCD sponsors two students, grades 9-12, to **Youth Conservation Camp** held at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg. The camp explores a wide variety of topics such as: soils, water quality, forestry, wildlife, urban pollution issues, using new technology in resource management and marine biology. Other activities may include touring the Dairy Science Center, hiking and exploring a cave. The date for the camp is July 13-19 and applications must be into the JMSWCD office by May 1. If you are interested, please call 347-3120, ext. 3, for further information.

The Conservation Strip is a quarterly publication of the JOHN MARSHALL SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, 98 Alexandria Pike, Suite 31, Warrenton, Virginia, 20186-2849.

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Catherine B. Waterhouse, Cons. Ed. Specialist
Nancy Zukas, Office Associate

Honorary Directors

Henry Green
Edwin F. Gulick

Newsletter Editor

Catherine B. Waterhouse

Phone

(540) 347-3120, ext. 3

Email:

johnmarshall-swcd@va.nacdnet.org

Website

www.fauquiercounty.gov/government/department/jmswcd

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National Presentation a Success

by: **Theresa Bradford, Fauquier County Soil Scientist**

Fauquier County Soil Scientists Danny Hatch and Theresa Bradford attended the National Onsite Wastewater Recycling Association annual conference in Kansas City, Missouri, the week of September 17, 2002, with the help of a generous donation from the JMSWCD. They presented a very well received paper, "Results of a Constructed Wetland as Pre-Treatment for Domestic Waste with Drip Disposal," from the Schoolhouse #18 project to an audience of approximately 120 conference attendees.

Schoolhouse #18, near Marshall, VA, built in 1887, was used as a one room schoolhouse until 1964. It has been designated as a state and national historic landmark. In order to use the schoolhouse as a public education center, the two-seat privy had to be upgraded to current standards. Due to limiting factors on the site, a conventional drainfield was ruled out. A two-cell constructed wetlands system with a drip disposal system was proposed and constructed.

The water from the bathroom flows into a septic tank and then into the first lined wetland cell, where the water is treated by microorganisms living in the roots of plants. The treatment continues as the water flows into the second

unlined wetland cell. Both cells have been planted with cattails, jack-in-the-pulpits, irises, bulrushes and arrowheads which have proven to effectively clean effluent. Once the water reaches the end of the second cell, the pump chamber release it into a drip irrigation field.

Water quality tests are periodically conducted. The results prove that the constructed wetlands treat the effluent efficiently - there was a 95-99% reduction in all parameters tested, all falling within range of the VA Department of Health limits for this type of system. This project is considered a success and continues to work to this day.

Since some of the funding for the project came from the US Environmental Protection Agency, a stipulation of the grant was the presentation of the data at a national on-site wastewater conference. Providing health department regulators with field data that will ultimately lead to the general approval and acceptance of this natural system was another goal. This project has put Fauquier County on the cutting edge of demonstrating how this user-friendly system works.

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